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SOME INTERESTING RECORDS OF NEBRASKA  
BIRDS FOR THE YEAR 1919

BY CLARENCE E. MICKEL AND RALPH W. DAWSON

The co-authors of this paper were very fortunate during the past year in securing interesting records of Nebraska birds. While many of these records were made on our field trips near Lincoln, we had exceptional opportunities during the year to secure notes on the birds of western and northern Nebraska. The most valuable data was obtained during the period from September 9 to September 20, during which time it was possible for us to make observations on the bird life in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county. This was especially opportune since so little data was available concerning the fall migration during this period in northwestern Nebraska, and we were rewarded by being able to secure notes on sixty-six species of birds, of which the following are new to the state list: Red-naped Sapsucker, Cassin Kingbird, Green-tailed Towhee and Western Robin.

Wherever the year's notes seem to add anything to the knowledge concerning abundance, migrations, or geographical distribution of the various species of Nebraska birds, they are here recorded.

1. *Gavia immer* (Brunnich)—Loon.

Mr. C. R. Snipes of Weeping Water, Neb., reported to us that he saw two loons, October 26, on an island in the Missouri River near Plattsmouth, Neb., and Mr. August Eiche reported that a

loon was brought to him, October 27, by a hunter, who had shot it near Lincoln. On October 30 Mr. L. R. Freadrich shot an adult male loon while hunting near Capital Beach. He generously gave it to Mr. Dawson, who made up the skin.

2. *Larus philadelphia* (Ord)—Bonaparte Gull.

On June 8 Mr. Dawson saw a Bonaparte Gull at Capital Beach. He was able to study it closely for some time. On July 19 we observed another individual of this species at Capital Beach.

3. *Sterna caspia* Pallas—Caspian Tern.

On August 1 we observed a single individual of this species at Capital Beach. The bird was flying low over the lake and remained in our vicinity for some time, so that we were able to study it carefully.

4. *Plegadis guarauna* (Linnaeus)—White-faced Glossy Ibis.

A juvenile specimen of an ibis was taken at Utica, Neb., on October 3 by Mr. Irvin Frey and was mounted by Mr. August Eiche. Since the Glossy Ibis and White-faced Glossy Ibis are not separable with certainty in their juvenile plumages, and since we have no definite records of the Glossy Ibis from Nebraska, the above specimen is referred to the form known to occur in the state.

5. *Ereunetes mauri* (Cabanis)—Western Sandpiper.

We found this sandpiper to be a common migrant during the fall migration of 1919. On July 13 we secured two adult females. We also have records of this species on July 17, 20 and 27, August 1, September 4, and October 12. These were always observed in flocks of Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers.

6. *Tryngites subruficollis* (Vieillot)—Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

On July 17 we saw a Buff-breasted Sandpiper near the water's edge at Capital Beach and were able to secure it. This is our earliest date for the appearance of this species during the fall migration in this vicinity. It may, perhaps, be an early date for the United States. We also have records on July 27 and September 2. It might be well to mention here that on September 17, 1916, Mr. Mickel saw two of these birds at Capital Beach and took them. This latter date is our latest fall record.

7. *Sphyrapicus varius nuchalis* Baird—Red-naped Sapsucker.

On September 13 we were tramping in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county, when we observed a woodpecker that was not familiar to us and upon securing the bird we found it to be a Red-naped Sapsucker. About one hundred yards from where we observed this bird we found a second one. The first specimen proved to be a juvenile male, while the second was an adult male. On September 23 Mr. Mickel secured a third specimen, a juvenile male, in the woods along the White River, about five miles north of Chad-

ron, Neb. It is possible that this is a fairly common bird during migrations in northwest Nebraska.

8. *Tyrannus verticalis* Say—Arkansas Kingbird.

Our latest date in the fall for this bird in Sioux county is September 11. We were in the same general vicinity until September 20, but saw none of these birds after the above date. The Arkansas Kingbird is an abundant breeder in this region and was very common up until September 11.

9. *Tyrannus vociferus* Swainson—Cassin Kingbird.

On the supposition that the Cassin Kingbird should occur in western Nebraska a careful watch was kept for it during the season. We were therefore very much pleased, On September 9, while driving from Crawford to Harrison, to find a kingbird which appeared to be this species, and upon securing the bird we found our identification to be correct. The exact locality where this specimen was taken is three miles west of Glen. On September 12 a second specimen was collected at the mouth of Monroe Canyon. While returning to Crawford on September 20, by automobile, we observed a flock of eight or nine Cassin Kingbirds near Fort Robinson and a third specimen was obtained. It is probable that this species is a common migrant in Sioux county, at least in the fall.

10. *Nuttallornis borealis* (Swainson)—Olive-sided Flycatcher.

On June 8 Mr. Mickel found a pair of these flycatchers in a grove about two miles west of Kimball, Neb. The specimen taken proved to be a female.

11. *Pica pica hudsonia* (Sabine)—Magpie.

Mr. Mickel saw four Magpies near Gresham, Neb., on October 10. We think this worthy of mention since this species seems to be retreating westwardly and is now seldom observed in the eastern part of the state.

12. *Nucifraga columbiana* (Wilson)—Clarke Nutcracker.

While this species has been known to occur along the Pine Ridge in northwest Nebraska, only one specimen had been taken previous to 1919, that taken by Mr. J. T. Zimmer on November 29, 1910. On September 16 we observed and secured a Clarke Nutcracker at the mouth of Sowbelly Canyon, Sioux county. This is almost two and one-half months earlier than Zimmer's specimen. One was also observed in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county, September 18.

13. *Carpodacus cassini* Baird—Cassin Purple Finch.

On the morning of September 18, Mr. Dawson discovered a female of this species in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county, and we

were able to secure the specimen. This is the second record for the state, the first being made by Mr. J. T. Zimmer at Crawford, December 7, 1910, when he saw and collected two males.

14. *Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis* (Say)—House Finch.

A pair of these finches was found by Mr. Mickel on June 2 in the western part of Kimball county. While tramping over the pine bluffs there late in the afternoon a male was heard singing and shortly afterwards he was located in a pine tree along with the female. They are very shy, but after several attempts the male was collected. There is a specimen taken at Haigler, Neb., in the collection of Mr. A. M. Brooking at Hastings; and it has been reported by Dr. R. H. Wolcott from Bull Canyon in Banner county, but no specimens were taken at that place. It is probable that the House Finch breeds in the pine bluffs in the west part of Kimball county, but no evidence was secured to verify this supposition.

15. *Loxia curvirostra bendirei* Ridgway—Bendire Crossbill.

Crossbills were abundant at Lincoln during the fall of 1919, and appeared earlier than usual, a small flock being noted on October 19. Two specimens were collected from this flock and have been referred by us to the Bendire Crossbill. Although this form has not been authorized by the A. O. U. committee its recognition apparently brings out an interesting fact concerning the source of the Crossbill migration at Lincoln. The Crossbill, *L. c. minor*, is eastern and northern in its distribution, while the Bendire Crossbill is of western origin. We know that in some seasons true *minor* occurs at Lincoln, since several specimens of this form are in the collection of Mr. J. T. Zimmer. In other seasons, the present for example all of our crossbills appear to be *benedirei*. These facts would indicate that frequently our winter Crossbills come from the west, but sometimes from the east.

16. *Rhynchophanes mccowni* (Lawrence)—McCown Longspur.

On April 11 Mr. Mickel secured a male McCown Longspur at Capital Beach. It was in a large flock of Chestnut-collared Longspurs, but there were undoubtedly several McCown Longspurs in the flock, other than the one taken.

17. *Passerherbulus henslowi occidentalis* (Brewster)—Western Henslow Sparrow.

The Western Henslow Sparrow is recorded so seldom in the state that the following record is deemed worthy of mention: On April 26 Mr. Mickel discovered an individual of this species in some thick grass near the water's edge at Capital Beach, and was able to secure the bird for a specimen. This is the first record for the state for some years.

18. *Zonotrichia querula* (Nuttall)—Harris Sparrow.

The authors were much astonished, on the morning of July 20, when returning from a tramp near Lincoln, to see what was apparently a Harris Sparrow dart into some weeds at the side of the road. After pursuing the bird for some time it was located in a cornfield and taken. It was examined carefully, but showed no evidence of any injury that would interfere with its normal migration. Since the breeding range of this species is several hundred miles north of this locality we consider this record remarkable. The specimen was a male.

19. *Zonotrichia leucophrys* (Forster)—White-crowned Sparrow.

The White-crowned Sparrow has formerly been recorded as occurring only in the eastern portion of the state. On June 9 a male was taken at Kimball, Neb. A specimen was also secured in 1916 at Scottsbluff, Neb., on June 23. It is therefore probable that the White-crowned Sparrow occurs commonly over the whole state during migrations.

20. *Spizella pallida* (Swainson)—Clay-colored Sparrow.

The Clay-colored Sparrow is an abundant migrant over the whole state. However, our earliest Lincoln record for the fall migration has been September 23. This year, on August 21, Mr. Mickel took a Clay-colored Sparrow at Long Pine, Neb. On August 24 Mr. Dawson observed Clay-colored Sparrows at Kearney. They were seen also at Valentine on August 28 and 29, and at Lincoln on August 31. These records are mentioned here as interesting in the light of our previous information. The migration this year may have been a month earlier than usual or it may be that this species begins to move earlier than we had supposed.

21. *Junco hyemalis mearnsi* Ridgway—Pink-sided Junco.

On September 19 we secured a specimen of the Pink-sided Junco in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county. This species has been recorded before in the state by Mr. J. T. Zimmer, who collected specimens on November 29, December 3, and December 8, 1910, at Crawford, Neb. Our record is all of two months earlier than these dates and it is probable that Pink-sided Juncos may be found in Sioux and Dawes counties from September 19 on through the winter.

22. *Melospiza melodia melodia* (Wilson)—Song Sparrow.

Song Sparrows were observed by Mr. Mickel at O'Neill on August 19, at Meadville on August 23 and 24, and at Valentine on August 26, 27, 28 and 29. These dates are so early as to suggest that the individuals observed may have been breeding birds rather than migrants.

23. *Oreospiza chlorura* (Audubon)—Green-tailed Towhee.

On September 11, while the authors were "birding" in a small

grove near the Bad Lands at the mouth of Monroe Canyon, Sioux county, a Green-tailed Towhee came flying across the prairie and alighted in a tree not far from us. Mr. Dawson at once identified the bird as the Green-tailed Towhee, and since this species had not been seen in the state before, we hastened to secure the specimen. It has been thought probable for some little time that this species might be found in the western part of the state, but it was not until this specimen was secured that we were able to add this interesting bird to our state list.

24. *Piranga ludoviciana* (Wilson)—Western Tanager.

The following dates on the Western Tanager are so late in the fall that they are mentioned here. Western Tanagers were observed in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county, on September 10, 11 and 17, and at Chadron on September 25. The Western Tanager seems to remain considerably later in the fall in western Nebraska than the Scarlet Tanager does in eastern Nebraska.

25. *Piranga erythromelas* Vieillot—Scarlet Tanager.

On August 25 Mr. Mickel secured a male Scarlet Tanager at Meadville, Neb., in the woods along the Niobrara river. This bird was molting and presented a strange appearance in its intermediate plumage, with here and there splashes of scarlet.

26. *Bombycilla cedrorum* Vieillot—Cedar Waxwing.

On August 22 Mr. Mickel secured a juvenal male Cedar Waxwing at Meadville, Neb., in the woods along the Niobrara river. Adult Cedar Waxwings were observed in the same locality on August 24. The fact that a juvenile bird was present here in August may indicate that the Cedar Waxwings nest along the Niobrara river somewhere near this locality.

27. *Dendroica caerulescens caerulescens* (Gmelin)—Black-throated Blue Warbler.

There have been no records of this species in the state for a number of years, even in eastern Nebraska, where one would most expect to find it. We were quite surprised therefore, to find a Black-throated Blue Warbler on September 19 in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county. The specimen was taken to establish the record, which is of interest not only with reference to the Nebraska fauna, but also in relation to the western limits of the range of this species.

28. *Dendroica magnolia* (Wilson)—Magnolia Warbler.

This warbler is occasionally met with in eastern Nebraska, but has not been recorded before from western Nebraska. On September 12 we secured a female Magnolia Warbler in Monroe Canyon, Sioux county.

29. *Dendroica castanea* (Wilson)—Bay-breasted Warbler.

Records of this warbler in the state are so rare that observations of it are always worth mentioning. On the morning of May 13 Mr. Dawson observed a Bay-breasted Warbler in Wyuka cemetery at Lincoln. The notes on this and the three following species were made during an exceptional wave of warbler migration through this locality.

30. *Dendroica fusca* (Muller)—Blackburnian Warbler.

The Blackburnian Warbler is another bird rarely found in the state and which we were fortunate enough to see at Wyuka cemetery on the afternoon of May 12. This is the first published record of this species for Lincoln.

31. *Dendroica virens* (Gmelin)—Black-throated Green Warbler.

While this warbler is not so rare as the two mentioned above, records of it at Lincoln are always interesting. We observed a Black-throated Green Warbler on the University Farm campus at Lincoln on the afternoon of May 12. Mr. Mickel also saw this species north of Cedar Bluffs in the woods along the Platte river on May 11.

32. *Wilsonia canadensis* (Linnaeus)—Canada Warbler.

This warbler has been recorded but few times of late years. On May 18 Mr. Mickel secured a male Canada Warbler in the woods along the Platte river north of Cedar Bluffs. A second individual was seen by him on this same occasion.

33. *Anthus spraguei* (Audubon)—Sprague Pipit.

So few specimens of this species have been taken in the state that the securing of an additional specimen is of interest. On October 19 we observed a small flock of Sprague Pipits in a pasture a short distance north of Lincoln. One of them was taken for the record. Another specimen that might be noted here is one found dead, under some telegraph wires at Lincoln on April 22, 1909, by Mr. Dawson. He gave the specimen to Mr. J. T. Zimmer and it is now in his collection.

34. *Planesticus migratorius propinquus* (Ridgway)—Western Robin.  
way).

Judging from our observations in Monroe Canyon during September of this year the Western Robin is the prevailing form in the Pine Ridge district of Sioux county. In fact, only a single specimen referable to the eastern form was noted during the ten days spent in the canyon, although robins were numerous and noted every day. A specimen collected September 11 is almost an exact counterpart of a specimen of the Western Robin taken in California by Professor Bruner. This is not the first definite record for the state, since specimens of this form were taken by Mr. J. T. Zimmer at Crawford in July, 1910.